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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

CANCER OF THE TONGUE.—*The Journal of the American Medical Association* mentions that a great increase of cases of cancer of the tongue and lip may be looked for in the next fifty years. Cancer frequently arises from syphilitic scars in the mouth. Chronic irritation, particularly that due to smoking, seems to be the great exciting cause. As this is so much more common among women than it used to be, buccal cancer may be expected to increase amongst them. It is now comparatively rare. Cancer of the tongue seldom occurs amongst the lower animals, there being only five cases on record.

EXCESS OF FAT IN FOOD.—In an article in the *Ohio State Medical Journal* it is stated that while few persons eat too much, it is difficult to regulate the diet so there will not be an excess of fat taken. It renders the urine acid and causes various distressing symptoms. It is thought that too high a percentage of fat reduces the intake of protein and carbohydrates, causing anemia and other disorders arising from malnutrition.

FOREIGN BODIES IN STOMACH.—In a report of cases in the *Annals of Surgery*, by a Baltimore surgeon, it is stated that there were removed from one patient, 1,059 small steel pins, 129 hair pins, 49 safety pins, 36 pieces of wire, buttons, etc.; in all, 1,290 different articles. The patient had swallowed them.

SYPHILIS.—In a paper in the *American Journal of Medical Science* it is asserted that the prevailing view is correct; once syphilis has invaded the body it is very difficult, if not impossible, to eradicate the disease. Proper treatment will minimize its effect on the person affected and render him comparatively harmless to the community. The establishment of clinics in connection with general hospitals is recommended and prophylactic treatment at the earliest possible moment.

DEATH FROM RHUBARB LEAVES.—A death is reported from eating rhubarb leaves which had been fried and prepared for greens. The case presented all the symptoms of oxalic acid poisoning. That salt is present in considerable quantity in rhubarb leaves and a very small amount in the stalks, not dangerous in the quantities usually eaten.

FATALITIES IN HOSPITALS.—In the *Journal of the American Medical Association* a writer considers the fatalities in hospitals due to

patients falling from windows. They were numerous in Cook County, Illinois. He thinks a standard hospital window and window screen should be devised that would prevent these accidents. Until these are used nurses should be on guard, especially during late afternoon and early evening, when the attempt is most frequently made. Toilet rooms should have barred windows and delirious patients or those likely to become so, should be specially protected.

DYSMENORRHEA.—A paper in the same Journal advises the trial of benzyl benzoate in cases of painful menstruation. The prescription used is benzyl benzoate 10 gm., mucilage of acacia 5 gm., aromatic elixir of eriodictyon 35 gm. Give one-half to two teaspoonfuls according to spasmodic type. In the forty-three cases, 81.3 per cent of the patients were relieved of painful menstruation.

GRADUATE COURSES IN PUBLIC HEALTH.—Eleven medical schools have established graduate courses in public health. Five of these have courses leading to the degree of Doctor of Public Health; three after a two-year course; and two, after a one-year course. The degrees of Graduate in Public Health, Certified Sanitarian, and Master of Public Health, are also given under varying conditions. It is proposed that the fee for the course leading to a degree or certificate, shall be \$250.00 and \$35.00 for instruction in any single branch of the course.

OPENING HYPODERMIC NEEDLES.—A correspondent in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* recommends an instrument by which the lumen of hypodermic needles can be kept free from rust and other obstructions. It is the pivot broach, used by jewelers to drill very fine holes in watch repairing. It is the size of the lumen of the needle and about the same length. If handled carefully, they are very satisfactory. They can be obtained from any jewelers' supply house at a very moderate cost.

CONVULSIONS AND EPILEPSY.—A writer in the *American Journal of Diseases of Children* says there is no way to determine immediately when a baby, or child, has a convulsion, or has had repeated convulsions, or has had repeated attacks suggesting petit mal, whether it has epilepsy or whether it will develop later.